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was given. Two such songs, victory songs, given during war raids, were recorded by us.

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A great many Gros Ventre men and women had power acquired by quest or otherwise from non-ancestral beings, but far fewer had ancestral helpers such as we are describing. Our informants, in fact, whose combined memories carried back to the early 1860's, could recall only five or at most six, seven or eight: Good Singer, Woman (or Bear Old Woman), Morning Star Appears (probably the same as Rising Cross), Bird Child, Bull Head, and perhaps two or three others.[8] Persons with ghost helpers had prestige, not greater however than outstanding doctors had.

● [425]

Power acquired from non-ancestral beings could be transferred by the possessor to another person through gift or sale. But a ghost helper was not transferable; such power was owned property; a ghost helper was not. A given person never had more than one ghost helper, so far as we could discover. In the shaking tent rite, only this one ghost helper had part,—no other being, neither the Supreme Being, nor Bhaʻa, nor Little Spirit,[9] nor any power-giving being.

At the time the ghost helper was accepted by its surviving relative, it promised him (or her) to come when summoned with the summoning song, but, in sharp contrast to the practice of non-ancestral power-bestowing beings, it imparted no power to him whatever, whether in war, medicine, gambling or love, except the "power," if it can be called such, to summon the ghost and except by sheer coincidence as in the case of Bad Bad Bull mentioned above. The ghost helper imparted not power, but knowledge; not any power of clairvoyance, prophecy or wisdom, but knowledge itself; not once and for all at the time of being accepted by the person, as did the power-bestowing beings but from time to time if and when summoned. The sole function of the ghost helper as

[8] Cf. Flannery, 1944, pp. 55-58; Cooper, 1944, pp. 62-77 passim. Rising Cross of Flannery, p. 56, was pretty surely the same person as Morning-Star-Appears or Morning-Star-Is-Up, of Cooper, p. 71; probably the same person as mentioned in Watches-All's narrative by Kroeber, 1908, pp. 216-17.

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[9] That Little Spirit could function in the shaking tent rite in place of an ancestral spirit, as stated reservedly by Cooper, 1940, p. 112, is an error, corrected by field data gotten by him later.

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787 778 looking more closely Keg saw that the fellow was he, Keg, himself. The fellow said: "Do as you see me doing here. Use my throat as an object (button) to hide." Then Keg woke up and saw nearby a covey of prairie chickens at their mating dance. Keg was so given gambling power by the prairie chicken(s), and was a very successful gambler, from that time on.[18]

778 424 425 Acquisition of power directly and in first instance from a power-giving being gave the acquirer right of exclusive ownership and use of the power. The power was a gift from the being to the human individual, and became the latter's property to be exclusively held and used by him, as would any gift given him outright by a fellow Gros Ventre. The owner could however transfer it, in most cases, by sale or gift. The Boy and Thick explained the main features of the system as follows: "The individual who acquired the power, and he alone, would use it. He would not part with it unless someone bought it from him. . . . In case of purchase he would teach the buyer the secret of how to use the power. Then too the owner of the power might transfer it without remuneration to one of his children if the owner lived to old age and had [living] children; he might do this rather than have the secret of the power die with him and do no one any good." On other occasions The Boy, speaking particularly of doctoring power, further explained: "While a doctor had many power songs, no other doctor had a right to sing these songs, unless the doctor-owner transferred his power to the other. . . . If someone else knew what plant a given doctor used and tried himself to use it, he could not get results, because he would not know the songs and rites to use with it. . . . Even though he should know the songs and rites as well as the plants, it would have been very wrong to try to use them. . . . Only the one who had [acquired] the power had the right to practice it. If everybody had been free to practice it, there would have been no use for the doctor to have gone through such hardship [fasting, etc.] to acquire it."

Power acquired in first instance as a gift from a power-bestowing being, although exclusively owned by the recipient, could be under

[18] For further details, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946, pp. 407-08.

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certain conditions, to be described as we go along, transferred by gift or sale, loaned, or delegated. 778 424 425

Individuals who had personal ancestral helpers practiced no kind of transfer, loan or delegation. After all, such helpers were in no sense "owned" by or the property of these individuals. The concept of the ancestral helper is fundamentally different from that of power in this as in most other respects.

While we obtained records of many instances of transfer, by sale or gift, of war, doctor, and love power, we obtained none of transfer of gambling power. Whether it was transferable at all is a point we could not fully clear up; more probably it was not, but at any rate actual transfer either did not occur or must have been excessively rare. According to The Boy: "Nobody wanted their [gamblers'] power. It became so that it was non-transferable. . . . There were some [possessors of power], and among these was the gambler, who would not transfer."

A transferee could not, so far as we could discover, retransfer power by sale or gift to a third party, except perhaps power to be lucky, especially invulnerable, in warfare. Our field data on this point are slim.

While women sometimes, as we have seen, got power direct from power-giving beings, very commonly,—"mostly" The Boy stated,—the powers they possessed were acquired by transfer from men, or from women.

Initiative in transfer could be taken either by the owner of a given power or by the party wishing to purchase it.

When power was transferred either by sale or by gift, the transferrer carefully taught the transferee all the songs, rites, objects and taboos that pertained to the power in question.

So much for transfer in general. We now turn to certain aspects, first of transfer by sale, and after that of transfer by gift.

Transfer by sale of doctoring power, at least of major doctoring power, was, according to The Boy and Thick, uncommon; that of love power, rather common.

A man who had by quest acquired doctoring power could transfer it by sale to a maximum of four people. After the fourth transfer, he, according to The Boy, "would have exhausted it so far as he 778 425

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778 425 himself was concerned, he had transferred it all away," and "had made himself negative again," that is no longer subject to the penalties of power possession. This first possessor was, so long as he kept his power, "a big fellow, but after he had transferred it to the four other people [men and/or women], there were now four big people, and he was such no more, so far as power was concerned and had no right even to sing the songs [proper to this power]. He was right where he had started [before acquiring this power]. The four could then go on and do just what he did when he alone possessed the power and they could [each, apparently] scatter it in four other different directions transfer it to four others." Such multiple diffusion by transfer did not, it seems, proceed far in actuality. "Scholars," as The Boy explained, "may all go through the same school under one great teacher, but seldom if ever do they all equal the teacher,—maybe only one, if any, will. So not all who got power by transfer were successful with the power because maybe they did not do or avoid doing all that the transferrer told them to do and avoid doing. So after a while the transferred power just died out."

832 778 425 Love power, or love medicine serving as the vehicle of power, could, however, in contrast to doctoring power, be transferred by the owner, at least the original one, to any number of people. It could be "transferred without limit and sold. The things," The Boy added by way of comment, "that were better for social life were limited. Love medicine [or power] was limitless, unless the possessor stopped gathering the root or bark or whatever it was he used to do his stuff."

Whether in cases of transfer by sale of doctoring power by a man to a woman the granting of sex intercourse by the woman was always and *de rigueur* the payment or part of the payment, is not quite clear from our field data. But that it was not uncommonly required is beyond question; in cases of man-to-woman sale transfer of love power, it was very common, in fact the usual thing, and seemingly more or less *de rigueur* to validate the transfer. When a woman sought such love power from a man who possessed it, she would watch her chance when his wife was not around and secretly carry out this part of the bargain. If the transferrer were

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a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

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Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[16]

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[17] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer.

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Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife:

[16] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[17] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
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the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he